

REMARKS

This response cancels currently pending Claim 109 and adds new Claim 110. Upon amendment, the above-identified U.S. application will have two independent claims (currently pending Claim 56 and new Claim 110) and 53 total claims (currently pending Claims 56-96 and 98-108 and new Claim 110). The Applicants previously paid for up to three independent claims and 53 total claims. Therefore, no official fees are due for excess claims.

In item 2 on page 2 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner objects to Figure II. This objection is moot and should be withdrawn because the Applicant previously filed a document entitled "Submission of Proposed Drawing Amendment for Approval by Examiner (37 C.F.R. 1.123)" with a copy of the proposed amended drawing. In the proposed amended drawing, the changes were highlighted in two ways: in red ink and in handwriting (i.e., in handwritten red ink). In view of the foregoing, the objection in item 2 should be withdrawn.

In item 3 on page 2 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejects currently pending Claims 56-93, 108, and 109 for allegedly being indefinite. This rejection should be withdrawn because currently pending Claims 56-93, 108, and 109 are believed to be sufficiently clear and definite to someone with ordinary skill in the art.

In items 4-7 on pages 3-4 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejects various currently pending claims for allegedly being anticipated by or obvious in view of the cited documents. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the

prior art does not teach or suggest the claimed invention.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner does not object to or reject currently pending Claims 94-96 and 98-107. Therefore, currently pending Claims 94-96 and 98-107 are considered to be allowable.

It is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Allowance of the application at an early date is solicited.

The Applicants reserve the right to seek protection for any unclaimed subject matter either subsequently in the prosecution of the present case or in a divisional or continuation application.

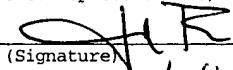
The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 12-0415. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, if an extension of time is required in order to prevent this application from lapsing, if an extension of time is required in order for the Examiner to consider this response on the merits, or if an extension of time is needed for any other reason, then the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 C.F.R 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary in order to make this response timely filed, to prevent this application from lapsing, or to have the Examiner consider the

response on the merits (or for any other reason); and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account No. 12-0415.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C., 20231 on

January 8, 2003  
(Date of Deposit)

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(Name of Applicant, Assignee  
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(Signature)

1-8-03  
(Date)

Respectfully submitted,

  
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